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Memorandum

Date: February 27, 2003

To: Robert Lee, Chairman of M.A.G. Building Codes Committee

From: Cheryl Levandowski, Chairperson of M.A.G. Building Inspector/Plans Examiner Forum

Subject: Recommendation to the M.A.G. Building Codes Committee for the uniform application for Fireblocking per 2000 IRC Section R602.8

The Building Inspector/Plans Examiner Forum recommends the MAG Building Codes Committee consider this a written interpretation of the specified code section.

Whereas, the requirements of the 2000 IRC Section 602.8.1, states “fireblocking shall consist of 2-inch (51mm) nominal lumber, or two thicknesses of 1-inch (25.4mm) nominal lumber with broken lap joints, or one thickness of 23/32-inch (19.8mm) wood structural panels with joints backed by 23/32-inch (19.8mm) wood structural panels or one thickness of 3/4-inch (19.1mm) particleboard with joints backed by 3/4-inch (19.1mm) particleboard, 1/2-inch (12.7mm) gypsum board, or 1/4-inch (6.4mm) cement-based millboard. Batts or blankets of mineral wool or glass fiber or other approved materials installed in such a manner as to be securely retained in place shall be permitted as an acceptable fire block. Loose-fill insulation material shall not be used as a fire block unless specifically tested in the form and manner intended for use to demonstrate its ability to remain in place and to retard the spread of fire and hot gases.” Section R602.8.1.1, states “Unfaced fiberglass batt insulation used as fireblocking shall fill the entire cross section of the wall cavity to a minimum height of 16 inches (406 mm) measured vertically. When piping, conduit or similar obstructions are encountered, the insulation shall be packed tightly around the obstruction.”

The requirement for fireblocking specifically states in the 2000 IRC Section R602.8.1.2 Fireblocking Integrity. “The integrity of all fireblocks shall be maintained.”

Analysis of discussion and recommendation

Based on the fact that the foam products which are not firestop material are not approved fire block material, the forum consensus is to not allow the use of foam products that are not listed as firestop material as fireblocking required in the 2000 IRC Section 602.8.1.